

From: MTThompson2@aol.com@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/18/02 10:36am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom It May Concern -

I am, and have been for years, a simple (perhaps more simple than most) Microsoft software user.

I have used, and am still using, Microsoft's products, both at work and at home, and am not wholly uncritical of the quality and reliability of their products (except when you compare them to all the rest).

Their computer operating system (beginning, for me in the early 90's, with Windows 2.0 and its subsequent improvements and upgrades) and their application software (Word, Excel, Money, Encarta, Streets & Trips, etc.) have improved my life beyond anything I can measure. I can't imagine what my life would have been like without the use of their innovative products.

While I have not closely followed the various Federal and State government's suits against Microsoft, I believe an outcome harmful to Microsoft will negatively affect Microsoft's ability to meet my needs, personally, both now and in the future. I do not believe that punishing Microsoft is in the public's (nor my) interest.

While it is true that Microsoft has profited enormously from selling its products and doubtlessly has a very aggressive (and clever) marketing strategy, I don't believe it could have prevailed over the competition unless its products were actually superior. I, along with all the others, would have sought out and used the better products, if there were any. Also, the fact that most of Microsoft's software works with and interacts with most of its other software is very advantageous to me. That this may disadvantage Microsoft's competitors from a marketing viewpoint is of little concern to me.

Furthermore, Microsoft has provided me (and the millions of others) their products at prices that are ridiculously small compared to their usefulness. If Microsoft has a monopoly on selling these products, why have the costs (to me, and everyone else) continued to decline?

I do have a complaint about Microsoft: On those occasions (admittedly relatively few) when my lack of knowledge, understanding, and/or computer sophistication causes me to have operating problems with their software, and I have failed as well to discern an answer from their enormously comprehensive (but Byzantine) website designed to provide solutions to users with problems, I am unable to talk directly to one of their technicians without being charged a fee for their "services."

However, it also seems reasonable to me that Microsoft cannot be held accountable for my ignorance (and laziness) and should be entitled to some compensation for providing me with the information I need on those occasions.

Their policy, coupled with my thriftiness (cheapness), has sometimes resulted in my digging more deeply into their various free resources, finding solutions myself, and becoming more educated and self-reliant as a result (a good thing).

I appreciate the DOJ looking out for my interests whenever their efforts actually are in my interest (i.e., prosecuting people guilty of election fraud, and terrorists). In this case, I think the DOJ's efforts are misguided, very wasteful of their limited time and resources (which my taxes help pay for), and not in my interest at all.

Sincerely,

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